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A GLOBAL INSURGENCY, OR SOMETHING MORE?

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ABSTRACT

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With the Global War on Terror (GWOT) beginning its sixth year and insurgencies evident in various regions across the globe, the underlying question is: are we fighting one global insurgency or isolated insurgent and/or terrorist organizations? The purpose of this paper is to explore the answer to that question. It reviews a sampling of terrorist/insurgency organizations operating worldwide and explores their ideologies and methodologies. Once this baseline is established, the argument is made that Al Qaeda is an insurgency with a global reach. However, the current world situation mandates a broader view than the myopic focus currently being given to a potential radical Islamic jihad.

A GLOBAL INSURGENCY, OR SOMETHING MORE?

> Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril.
>
> —Sun Tzu[1]

Sun Tzu's famous quote with regard to knowing one's enemy is as relevant today as it was over two thousand years ago when it was written, particularly in light of the current Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). This "Long War," as it has also been called, has been an ongoing concern of the United States for decades, but the devastating attacks in 2001 and the President's formal declaration of the GWOT at that time mark the beginning of this war for many Americans over five years ago. After initial military success in both Afghanistan and Iraq, recent struggles in both regions and other areas of the world have raised the question of the very nature of the war that is being fought and whether it can be won. Terrorist organizations and insurgencies exist on every continent and to some degree in virtually every nation across the globe,[2] so the underlying question is whether the United States and the rest of the Western World are caught in a global insurgency, or if they are fighting isolated insurgent and/or terrorist organizations. The purpose of this paper is to explore that issue by reviewing a sample of the predominant insurgency groups identified in the literature. The analysis that follows will show that, while there are insurgent organizations with a global reach (Al Qaeda in particular), there are numerous insurgencies being waged across the globe with limited ties to one another whatsoever. This poses a far more complicated scenario than fighting the ideology of just one organization.

Insurgency vs. Terrorism: A Clear Distinction?

The concept of an insurgency is definitely not a new phenomenon. As O'Neill states, "Insurgency has probably been the most prevalent type of armed conflict since the creation of organized political communities."[3] The United States has funded the RAND Corporation to research insurgencies and counterinsurgency operations for over 50 years and literally hundreds, if not thousands of books, articles, and monographs have been written and presented on the topic.[4] Metz and Millen also note that insurgencies have existed throughout history and that the world has entered a period when "insurgency is common and strategically significant."[5] Even a basic definition of the term "insurgency" seems elusive, however, and the titles of insurgents and terrorists are frequently used interchangeably in both the media and in printed

literature. Morris posits that one of the fundamental reasons for the confusion is that both insurgents and terrorists employ similar tactical measures, namely terrorism, as a part of their efforts.[6] Further, he points out that several organizations mentioned on the State Department's listing of terrorist organizations would be more appropriately listed as insurgencies, including Al Qaeda, November 17, and Abu Nidal.[7]

Joint Publication 1-02 provides some differentiation between the terms. The publication defines an insurgency as "an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict."[8] It further defines terrorism as "the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological."[9] Based on these definitions, the fundamental difference between the two terms seems to be the end state desired: the insurgent's goal being the overthrow of a constituted government while the terrorist's goals are not as far-reaching.

O'Neill's definition of an insurgency is slightly different than the joint definition, but maintains its basic tenets. He defines an insurgency as "a struggle between a nonruling group and the ruling authorities in which the nonruling group consciously uses political resources (e.g., organizational expertise, propaganda, and demonstrations) and violence to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of legitimacy of one or more aspects of politics."[10] Kilcullen posits a somewhat different definition of modern insurgency, however. He states that an "insurgency is a struggle to control a contested political space, between a state (or group of states or occupying powers), and one or more popularly based, non-state challengers."[11] This explanation allows for the waging of insurgencies against a wider range of enemies than the governing entity of a particular state. He further argues that, unlike "classical insurgencies," where the insurgent is trying to overthrow the government, modern insurgencies can emerge after a state fails, in ungoverned lands, or even exist across national borders.[12]

Hammes made a similar argument with regard to the nature of the modern insurgency as he wrote that "insurgencies are no longer the special province of single-party organizations like Mao's and Ho Chi Minh's. Today, insurgent organizations are comprised of loose coalitions of the willing, human networks that range from local to global."[13] If the argument is to be made that the U.S. in now embroiled in a global insurgency, then definitions such as Kilcullen's or Hammes will have to be accepted as the norm. This does not imply that the modern insurgent is completely different than those of the past, as Hammes also noted that key factors of insurgency have not changed over time, such as its political nature, protracted timelines, and intensely human (versus technological) nature.[14] My bottom line is to, therefore, evolve the

definition of insurgency to recognize that today's organizations are different from the past, and to ensure that our definition does not go beyond the scope of today's reality. Kilcullen's and Hammes' definitions accomplish this task.

A sampling of insurgency organizations operating worldwide that follows will explore the ideologies and methodologies of the individual insurgencies. This sampling is a subset of active insurgencies and was chosen for its geographic diversity as well as range of objectives. This baseline will be used to develop the argument of whether the United States is involved in a global insurgency. The insurgencies to be reviewed are The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC), The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA), Hezbollah, the Chechnya Insurgency, and Al Qaeda.

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC)

FARC or FARC-EP, Colombia's oldest and largest guerrilla group, was established in 1964-1966 as the military wing of the Colombian Communist Party.[15] The organization was initially a byproduct of the period known as "La Violencia" in Columbia, a timeframe between 1948 and 1958 marked by clashes between the conservative governments and the local peasantry that resulted in the death of more than 300,000 Columbians.[16] Manuel Marulanda Velez, also known as "Tirofijo," which translates to "sure shot," emerged as a central leader for the guerrillas from the liberal uprisings and, although his health is said to be failing, remains the leader of the FARC until the present time .[17]

Throughout the 1960's and 1970's, the Columbian government focused on legislation that led to the concentration of land ownership, which ultimately resulted in the undermining of small-scale peasant producers and the rise of peasant proletarianization.[18] At the same time the Columbian government did little to try and counter the insurgencies that had become indigenous within their borders, telling their security forces to "deal with the rebels…to maintain public order."[19] During this period of minimal interest from the government, the FARC grew from a movement of about 500 people to a small army of 3,000, with a centralized hierarchal structure, a general staff, military code, training school, and political program.[20]

In the 1980s, the FARC turned to illegal narcotics trade to fund their actions against the Columbian government and increased their power base. Marks argues that the FARC was of minimal consequence prior to entering into the drug trade, noting that it "only became a going concern when it linked up with drug production as a funding source."[21] Since then the Columbian government has tried to negotiate with FARC leadership to end the insurgency with

little success.[22] Regarding the current state of affairs in Columbia, Rempe states that; "A situation now exists between government, insurgent, and paramilitary forces in which: 1) competing interest groups are so violently opposed on highly salient issues that their differences cannot be reconciled within the current political system; and 2) two or more competing groups have sufficient resources—political, financial, organizational, military—to establish 'sovereignty' over a substantial political or military base, and thus seek to achieve their goals by force."[23]

According to their website, the FARC's stated goal is to "to overcome the great economic, social, cultural, ethnic, and political inequalities in Colombia" and build a Marxist state. [24] They have built a substantial power base among the peasantry in the ungoverned regions of the country, and have used both individual "hit and run"[25] attacks against government forces, as well as more robust attacks against specific targets. Their paramilitary and political activities have been almost exclusively directed against the local Colombian government throughout their history,[26] with little activity or alliances outside the borders of Columbia. They have cooperated with the Ejercito de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army; ELN) when their interests have coincided,[27] but there are no strong ties between the two organizations. Rabasa et. al. reported that there have been recent attempts at communications between middle-eastern terrorist organizations and the FARC,[28] but there do not appear to be any formal ties between the FARC and any Islamic organization at this time.

<u>Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)</u>

Sri Lanka is an island nation located about 20 miles off the southern coast of India.[29] The majority of the country's population (74%) is Sinhalese, with the Tamils, who are mostly concentrated in the north and east of the island, forming the largest ethnic minority (18%).[30] [31] The island nation was granted its independence in 1948 after over 130 years under British rule. Sri Lanka has had a stable democracy since that time, although Tamil grievances against the Sinhalese-dominant government have existed since the independent government was formed.[32] After peaceful efforts between the political parties failed, the LTTE was formed in 1972 by the Tamil-speaking populations in the north and east of Sri Lanka, with a stated goal of an independent state for their constituents. According to their website:

> "The Tamil people of the island of Ceylon (now called Sri Lanka) constitute a distinct nation. They form a social entity, with their own history, traditions, culture, language and traditional homeland. The Tamil people call their nation Tamil Eelam." [33]

In spite of their stated intention of achieving their goals through peaceful means, Jane's World Insurgencies Report categorizes the LTTE as the most ruthless terrorist organization in the world.[34] They are attributed with numerous terrorist innovations which include being one of the first terrorist organizations to emphasize suicide bombings as its primary means of attack.[35] They have used this method in over 200 strikes in the past two decades, and the attacks have been largely successful in achieving their primary target.[36] LTTE strikes are not limited to terrorist actions, however. Their on-ground strength is estimated to be between 12,000 and 20,000 troops, organized around small teams who only attack via conventional means when the tactic is to their advantage.[37] It is also has a sea arm that is capable of countering a conventional navy.[38]

The LTTE and Sri Lankan Government agreed to a ceasefire in February of 2002,[39] but violence has continued in the region. The Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission (SLMM) has reported over 3,500 violations of the ceasefire by LTTE between February 2002 and December 2005, and Human Rights Watch also reports myriad abuses by the Sri Lankan government during the same time period.[40] They are a well-funded organization with major financial contributions coming from displaced Tamils currently living in Canada, France, Norway, the U.K., and other European countries.[41] They also have an active recruiting component that will coerce families into providing children as young as 11 or 12 into service, or even resort to kidnapping future soldiers, if necessary.[42]

The LTTE are an obvious threat to the Sri Lankan government, and will remain one until they can be defeated militarily or the government can negotiate an actual peace settlement and bring the LTTE into the legitimate political arena.[43] They do not currently threaten the United States,[44] and it appears that the LTTE currently has no operational connection with other terrorist groups.[45] Their attacks have been limited to Sri Lanka and India,[46] with their primary concern being the independence of the Tamil people in Northern Sri Lanka.

Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA)

The ETA was established in the Spring of 1959 by a handful of young Basque nationalists whose aim was to gain independence from Spain.[47] Its founders came from the youth section of the Basque Nationalist Party (PVN), a political party that had been established in the late 1800's in order to "safeguard Euskadi (the Basque country), from an 'invasion' by allegedly racially inferior, immoral, and godless immigrant workers from other regions of Spain."[48] The Basques can trace their lineage in Spain as far back as AD 818 (some say even to Adam and Eve)[49] in

the regions known as Álava, Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya, and Navarre,[50] and these are the regions where they have sought to create their independent nation.

The ETA's political ideology evolved in the ensuing years, and they eventually settled into a "deep leftist Marxism."[51] The idea that gave ETA supporters in the Basque region its revolutionary appeal was the fear of a radical "repossession" of wealth by the proletariat.[52] The people in the region were neither poor nor were abused by the national government, but rather this fear of the proletariat and a deep sense of Basque nationalist pride were the primary drivers for the organization.[53] The first ETA terrorist activity consisted of a bomb on a train in July of 1961,[54] and its violence has continued to the present day. There was officially a cease fire in effect as of March 2006, but this was broken on December 30, 2006, when the group exploded a bomb at Madrid's airport that killed two people.[55] Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero has been widely criticized for negotiating with the ETA after their cease fire, but has vowed that police pressure and court trials would continue against the organization.[56]

The ETA is attributed with responsibility for over 800 deaths in Spain since its inception, and there are currently over 400 members of the organization in prison for various crimes.[57] The organization's activities have been limited to the Basque regions of France and Spain, and its funding has come primarily from bank robberies, kidnapping, and extortion.[58] External links include an alliance with the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), Iran, Lebanon, and reported bases in Latin America.[59] There have also been recent reports of a possible connection to Islamic groups linked to AL Qaeda.[60] To date, the ETA has not posed a threat outside if its traditional operating area. If the reports of a connection to Al Qaeda are proven true, however, then the organization could become a threat beyond the Spain/France region.

Hezbollah

According to the RAND Corporation, Hezbollah is "the best known and the most capable of the Islamist militant organizations that employ terrorism yet are not affiliated with Al Qaeda."[61] The organization was formed in 1982 after the "Peace for Galilee War" between Lebanon and Israel.[62] The organization's objectives at that time were the eradication of what it viewed as Western imperialism in Lebanon, the bringing to justice of those who committed atrocities during the war, establishing an Islamic government in Lebanon,[63] and the destruction of the state of Israel.[64] Hezbollah is a militant Islamic organization that follows the Shi'a Islam ideology.

From its inception, Hezbollah has had strong ties to both the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Iran. The PLO helped to train and equip Shi'ite militias in southern Lebanon during the 1970's and early 80's, and these militias were the precursor to Hezbollah.[65]

With regard to Iran, since its inception, Hezbollah has maintained its belief that the Ayatollah Khomeini was the divinely inspired ruler of their ideology, and that his successor, Ali Khameini, is the true "Legal Guardian of the Muslims" today.[66] Iran has also helped to train and fund Hezbollah forces throughout their history.

Hezbollah's tactics have proven to be flexible based on the situation. In the beginning, one of the primary aims of Hezbollah was to expel the Israeli military from southern Lebanon. To meet this goal, it mounted ambushes on Israeli and South Lebanon Army (SLA) units in southern Lebanon, and attacked northern Israel using Katyusha rockets.[67] However, terrorism has been Hezbollah's primary military tactic. Its successful 1983 suicide assault against the U.S. Marine barracks in Beruit, which killed 241 Americans and 58 French servicemen, is the largest act of violence it has managed against the United States.[68]

Since the end of the Lebanese civil war in October 1990, Hezbollah has evolved into a more "pragmatic socio-political movement."[69] It holds 14 of the 128 seats in Lebanon's Parliament, and is a member of the Resistance and Development Bloc, which holds a total of 40 seats, or 27.3% of their total government.[70] This is not to imply that Hezbollah has abandoned its origins, however. On July 16, 2006, members of Hezbollah killed eight Israeli soldiers and kidnapped two others in a raid from across the border.[71] An Israeli military response followed, and after 34 days of intense fighting, which saw extensive bombing and rocket attacks between the countries of Lebanon and Israel, the two governments and Hezbollah agreed to a cease fire. According to the USAIDE report, almost 1,200 Lebanese citizens were killed in the action, over 4,000 wounded, and another 200,000 displaced from their homes.[72] Hezbollah provided relief to many of the affected Lebanese population, and has proven capable of providing social services that outperform the local government's.[73]

Hezbollah's roots lie in its strong desire to liberate Lebanon from foreign occupation and the destruction of the state of Israel. As such, it is an obvious threat to U.S. interests. However, Hezbollah is not universally viewed as a terrorist organization. Countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia separate the military and political wings of the organization, while the European Union and Russia do not list Hezbollah as a terrorist organization at all.[74] Some of these designations were done in hopes of furthering the Middle East peace process, but nonetheless, Hezbollah's political and social acts do appear to be giving them some legitimacy. While the organization does appear to receive funding from several countries in South America,[75] they have not aligned themselves with Al Qaeda nor do they appear to be a part of a larger global Islamic movement. As a RAND report notes, "the only Muslim community that, in

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Hezbolla's view requires pan-Islamic jihad on its behalf, is the Palestinians."[76] This is not to say that the organization is incapable of joining a larger jihad, just that it has not done so to date.

Chechnya Insurgency

Chechnya is a small republic in the southern part of Russia just north of the Caucasus mountain range. Its capital, Grozny, is about 1,000 miles south of Moscow, and the republic is geographically similar in size to the state of Connecticut.[77] The local population in the region is waging an insurgency against the Russian Federation, and as presented in a paper by Finch at the 2005 Military History Symposium at Leavenworth, Russia has been involved in a war with Chechnya intermittently for the past 250 years over the question of Chechen independence.[78]

During the 20th century, Chechnya had a brief moment of independence during the Communist Revolution in 1917, but Stalin quickly ended the rebellion and brought the region under Soviet control.[79] Stalin also deported 400,000 Chechnyaians to Siberia in 1944, with over 25% dying en route.[80] The people were allowed to return in 1957, and the country lived in relative peace until the fall of communism in Eastern Europe in 1989.[81] General Jokhar Dudayev declared the republic's independence in 1991, and was considered the republic's first nationalist president.[82] Dudayev expelled Russian troops and seized their arsenals at that time.[83]

Russian President Boris Yeltsin ordered a military attack on Chechnya in 1994, and the 2-year period of hostilities that followed featured a number of battles where "a significant number of Chechen fighters engaged Russian forces in a force-on-force type of battle."[84] These types of battles have not been the norm over time, however, the Chechen tactics have evolved into insurgent-type attacks, including engaging civilian locations.[85] A ceasefire was arranged in 1996 that gave Chechnya its independence in all but name.[86]

Over 1,200 trained mujahideen based in Chechnya and under the leadership of Shamil Basayev attacked the neighboring Russian Republic of Dagestan in 1999.[87] This ultimately led to another Russian assault into Chechnya, setting in motion a new series of insurgencies that have lasted until the present day. The primary goal of the over-arching Chechen insurgency is the establishment of an independent Chechen state. Yet, there is a portion of the Chechen military leadership that seeks to establish an independent radical Islamist state in the region, with a portion of these leaders pushing for unification with the Muslims in neighboring Dagestan and Ingushetia.[88] From Russia's point of view, the conflict in Chechnya has transformed into a battle against the larger Global War on Terrorism.[89] As the Chechen situation has become more desperate for the local population, fundamentalist and radical Islamic clerics have been

able to gain a foothold in the region by providing material support to the Chechen fighters.[90] The insurgents have been connected to terrorist attacks in Moscow and Turkey,[91] showing a capability to extend their operational reach beyond their local borders. If that trend continues and radical Islamic idealism takes hold, they could pose a threat to western interests.

<u>Al Qaeda</u>

The most notorious terrorist organization in modern times, Al Qaeda's origins can be traced to the pan-Islamic struggle against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989.[92] Although Al Qaeda's founder, Osama Bin Laden, and his associates have been linked to attacks against U.S. targets since 1992,[93][94] his fatwa of February 1998 against the "Jews and Crusaders" is viewed by the State Department as the formal founding for this organization.[95] Their long-term strategy exists in two phases. The first phase consists of removing the United States and other western influences in the Middle East, followed by the establishment of an Islamic caliphate based on their interpretation of the holy Koran in Egypt. The second phase would consist of using the caliphate as a launching point for a jihad against the rest of the Western world.[96] Al Qaeda is a radical Sunni Muslim group, whose ideologies are described by Kepel as "jihadist-salafisit," meaning an arrogant respect for the sacred texts of the Koran in their most literal form, combined with an absolute commitment to jihad.[97]

The accomplishments of Al Qaeda are well known, with their most notable attack against the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001, providing the impetus for the Unites States' Global War on Terrorism. Until the winter of 2001, Al Qaeda had maintained training bases and its headquarters in Afghanistan, but they were ousted from their long-standing operation centers there by U.S. and coalition forces. This action, combined with America's success in killing or capturing many of Al Qaeda's senior leadership, has caused the organization to transition and even led some to assume its demise in 2003,[98] but the Madrid bombings in 2004 combined with other attacks provided evidence to the contrary. The preponderance of the literature cites Al Qaeda as a formidable force as well as potential leader of a global insurgency. As Jenkins states, "we have strained Al Qaeda's organization, but we have not put it out of business. Since September 11, 2001, jihadists affiliated with Al Qaeda or inspired by its ideology have carried out major terrorist attacks from Bali to London on average of about one every two months, not counting the continuing violence in Afghanistan, Kashmir, Iraq, Israel, and Russia."[99]

Bruce Hoffman describes the current Al Qaeda organization as being comprised of four distinct dimensions: (1) Al Qaeda Central, comprised of the remnants of the pre-9/11

organization; (2) affiliates and associates, those with formal alliances to Al Qaeda in place; (3) fresh recruits, local individuals drawn to Al Qaeda's ideology; and (4) the Al Qaeda Network, made up of like-minded locals who gravitate toward one another in order to execute terrorist attacks in support of the jihad.[100] Jenkins describes a similar organization containing the core Al Qaeda members, like-minded groups, and individuals drawn to the cause, some of whom may have been trained by Al Qaeda in Afghanistan prior to 2001.[101] Kilcullen also argues that the War on Terrorism is actually a campaign against a globalized Islamist insurgency with Al Qaeda in the lead.[102] He points out, among other arguments, that "Al Qaeda has cells in at least 40 countries and, though disrupted by the loss of its Afghan base in 2001, is still functioning globally."[103] The U.S. State Department also acknowledges that Al Qaeda "has cells worldwide and is reinforced by its ties to Sunni extremist networks."[104]

The current total strength of Al Qaeda is unknown. The U.S. State Department estimates its members and affiliates at "several thousand,"[105] and Jenkins estimates Al Qaeda's "core membership" to be between 300 and 500, with estimates of "associate members" in the low tens of thousands.[106] The overall number at any given time is not the primary concern, but rather the breadth of its ability to conduct terrorist attacks and spread its ideology across the globe. As evidence to this, consider that the 9/11 attacks were carried out by 19 men, with estimates of additional supporters from outside the country at about the same number.[107] Jenkins also points out that most major attacks carried out since 9/11 were conducted by "handfuls of terrorists,"[108] not major quantities of forces. This ability to inflict substantial damage with minimal assets in personnel is clearly one of the strengths of the organization.

Financing for Al Qaeda has changed since 9/11. Prior to the attacks on the U.S. and the subsequent crackdown on their financial systems, Gunaratna estimated that Al Qaeda's annual expenses exceeded $50 million.[109] Further, he states that Al Qaeda funded individuals in various Islamic groups, including the Taliban, in excess of $100 million for their support.[110] The primary sources of this funding included Osama Bin Laden's personal wealth and wealthy Arab benefactors, including respected individuals in the UAE, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar.[111] Al Qaeda's current financing still includes many of the same benefactors, but money is now being raised increasingly at the grassroots level of support, with larger numbers of small donations from throughout the Muslim world.[112] A substantial amount of funding (in the hundreds of millions of dollars) has been blocked through the enhanced financial security system being enforced throughout the globe, but there remains considerable uncertainty about the amount of funding that is successfully transmitted.[113]

Al Qaeda is the only insurgency to be discussed that has an operating area that spans the globe. It can be argued that Al Qaeda is a terrorist organization as opposed to an insurgency, and in fact the U.S. State Department still includes Al Qaeda on its list of terrorist groups,[114] but Morris argues that this organization is an insurgency based on the following criteria:[115]

- Its terrorism compliments a larger political program as opposed to being its only ideology;
- It maintains connections to a significant segment of society;
- The scope and scale of its dedicated, deployed militants;
- Its methods are not a complete departure from its own societal norms; and
- The relative lack of condemnation by leading Islamic clerics.

John Mackinlay also argued as early as November of 2001 that Al Qaeda was operating as an insurgency as opposed to a terrorist organization.[116] Al Qaeda and it operations also fit Kilcullen's proposed definition of a modern insurgency as discussed previously. Finally, the U.S. Army's newly released Counterinsurgency Manual (FM 3-24) acknowledges Al Qaeda to be an insurgency.[117] Based on these arguments and the actions outlined on the previous pages, I consider the Al Qaeda organization an insurgency.

Whether Al Qaeda controls the larger Islamic jihad is another matter, however. As Kilcullen notes:

> "Islamist movements appear to function through regional 'theaters of operation' where operatives cooperate, or conduct activities in neighboring countries. Evidence suggests that Islamic groups within theaters follow general ideological or strategic approaches aligned with Al Qaeda pronouncements, and share a common tactical style and operational lexicon. But there is no clear evidence that Al Qaeda directly controls jihad in each theater"[118]

This lack of control is one area that is common to Jenkins' and Kilcullen's descriptions of Al Qaeda as well. It also forms the basis for an argument against the Al Qaeda movement being a truly global insurgency, for if the local organizations are autonomous entities and beyond Al Qaeda's control, is it a true global insurgency? Even if Al Qaeda is a global insurgency, this lack of direct control is a seam in their organization, one that can be exploited to aid in the defeat of this enemy.

Evaluation

I have argued above that Al Qaeda is an insurgency using a current definition of the term and further, that it has a global reach. A simple combination of the two points would indicate that the U.S. is fighting a global insurgency against Al Qaeda and its affiliates. That

combination oversimplifies the current situation, however. In addition to Al Qaeda, I have shown five additional insurgencies from across the globe, each of which has exhibited substantial destructive power against their local government but did not originate as a part of the Al Qaeda network, nor do they appear to be a part of a larger jihad today. Rabasa et. al. also conducted a similar analysis in their 2-part series on the terrorist universe and a global jihadist movement, showing 12 terrorist groups with no ties to Al Qaeda or any Islamic Jihad whatsoever.[119] These are obviously not exhaustive listings, as the U.S. State Department lists 40 active terrorist organizations on their website,[120] and Jane's shows insurgencies and/or terrorist organizations to some degree on virtually every nation across the globe.[121] Therefore, the Unites States and her allies have clear concerns with regard to insurgent and/or terrorist organizations that extend beyond Al Qaeda and an Islamic jihad.

The counter to this argument would be that a global Islamic jihad, if one does exist, dwarfs any other insurgencies or terrorist groups, making my argument trivial by comparison. Consider three possible, if not probable, consequences of proceeding along that path. First, if the U.S. treats a global Islamic jihad as its only focus for GWOT, a likely outcome would be a one-size-fits-all approach to countering that jihad. As Packer reminds us, counterinsurgency requires a "granular knowledge of the social terrains on which it is competing."[122] A single, global approach to all insurgencies as if they were the same entity, with identical beliefs and aspirations, would lead to the alienating of many individuals that might have been steered in a different direction with the proper attention and guidance. Further, if the U.S. takes such an approach, there is the real potential that our adversaries could use that against us and create a "U.S. versus the Islamic World" campaign that would motivate even more moderate Muslims to take up the radical ideology. Some would argue that this campaign is already well underway.

A second effect of treating all Islamic groups as one jihad is that the U.S. would, in all probability, ignore potential seams among different terrorist organizations that could be exploited through various means. As addressed during the discussion of Al Qaeda, much of their organization and alliances are loosely formed, with little or no communication among autonomous cells. If the individual cells could be turned against the ideology each one turned would be one less group to fight. Further, if the communication network could be infiltrated there would be opportunities to send mixed messages, cause internal strife among the cells, or even pit one against the other. These seams will never be revealed or exploited if the jihad is treated as one entity.

A third, and possibly most obvious outcome of focusing on a global jihad and ignoring other terrorist/insurgent organizations, would be the possible emergence of another organization

or multiple groups that could emerge from the shadows just as Al Qaeda did in the late 1990's. With a myopic focus on an Islamic jihad the U.S. would run the real risk of missing the emergence of an actor such as this, or even worse, we could wind up funding or creating the organization just as we did with the beginnings of Al Qaeda when they were fighting the Soviet Union in the 1980's. The U.S. must take a broader, long-range view of the world and avoid the strategic mistakes of the Cold War, one which Zakaria argues we are already making, by "treating a fractious group of adversaries as a unified monolith." [123]

This is not to imply that the United States has the resources to avoid insurgencies in every corner of the globe. No nation on earth has that kind of influence or power. As former Secretary of State Donald Rumsfeld argued before Congress that "No nation, no matter how powerful, has the resources or capability to defend everywhere at every time, against every conceivable type of attack.[124] Insurgencies can be stopped in any culture if the local government acts swiftly and appropriately, however. As a modern example, insurgency was avoided in Indonesia after the 2004 tsunami. Packer describes how a radical Islamic organization tried to initiate an insurgent movement in the province of Aceh after the Tsunami hit, but "resentment toward the outsiders, combined with the swift humanitarian action of American and Austrailian warships, helped to prevent the Acehnese rebellion from becoming part of the global jihad."[125] As General Pace, the current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated, "The support we provide other countries is essential to helping them police their own land and eradicate terrorist safe havens."[126] We must pursue a globalized effort that works on the granular level to be successful in this campaign.

Conclusion

We are in the sixth year of the Global War on Terrorism, a war which has been fueled by globalization and radical ideologies from across the globe. Some would argue that the United States is embroiled in a global insurgency against an Islamic jihad with Al Qaeda in the lead. This approach is entirely too myopic to be effective, however. Counterinsurgency requires action at the lowest level to gain the hearts and minds of the individuals at every location where insurgents could gain refuge and sanctuary, and a one-size-fits-all approach will not work due the diversity of people and cultures across the globe. Americans have been accused, justifiably so, of being insensitive to the nuances of other cultures and not understanding the nature of our friends and enemies prior to engaging in either negotiations or battle. The GWOT will not be won through attrition. Like all insurgencies, it must be won by gaining the hearts and minds of

the people in the individual regions of the globe where the insurgents seek sanctuary. We must work with allies and like-minded nations to eliminate the underpinnings of insurgency at the grass roots level, and avoid the mistakes of the Cold War where, in the words of Zakaria, we "treated a fractious group of adversaries as a unified monolith."[127] At that time, by treating all communist states such as China, Cuba, North Korea, etc., as enemies and part of the larger Soviet bloc, the U.S. failed to recognize and exploit the differences between these countries. We pushed them together and forced alliances between nations that did not naturally exist. A better strategy would have been to try and understand each nation individually, and then find common ground where, at a minimum, we could keep them from uniting against us. In a best-case scenario the U.S. could have found additional allies against the larger foe.   A similar situation exists today with the Global War on Terrorism. To avoid the mistakes of the past we must recognize the enemy for who they are and take action accordingly.

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